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REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTICES.

The Avestan Alphabet and its Transcription. By A. V. WILLIAMS JACKSON, of Columbia College, New York City. With Appendices. Stuttgart, W. Kohlhammer, 1890. (36 pp.) 8vo.

The transcription of the Avestan alphabet has of late often been discussed, especially since Hübschmann in 1879 published his comprehensive and thorough essay on the phonetic value of the Zend alphabet (*Zeitschr. f. vergl. Sprachf.* Vol. 24, p. 323 sqq.). H. summed up the objections to be made to the former systems (among which the one used by Justi in his *Handbuch der Zendsprache* was for some time almost generally accepted) and advocated the introduction of a new or at least partly new transcription. Additional proposals were soon made by other scholars, e. g. by Pischel in his brief but important essay : *Die Umschreibung des Baktrischen* (Bezenb. Beitr. Vol. 6, 1881, pp. 272 sqq.). Still there was more unity in the conviction that the former systems had to be reformed than in regard to the new proposals. In 1881 the Indogermanic section of the Fifth Internat. Oriental Congress at Berlin created a committee for the purpose of submitting a uniform transliteration for the Sanskrit and Avestan alphabet to the next congress of Orientalists (see *Verhandl. d. 5. Internat. Orient. Congr. zu Berlin*, Vol. 1, p. 89). But the committee failed to report to the next congress and nothing has been heard of it since. Within the last ten years the condition of the question has, on the whole, not changed materially. If many scholars still continue to use Justi's transcription it is not because they claim it superior to the newer systems, but because none of the latter has been as generally accepted as Justi's alphabet was some time ago.¹

However, there are several reforms in which all of the newer systems practically agree. Thus it may be taken as commonly granted that Justi's *ç* and *s* ought to be replaced by *ś* and *ṣ* (i. e. Engl. *sh*), the former being a simple dental, the latter a palatal sibilant.

Again, it is generally admitted that the sounds transcribed by Justi as *kh*, *gh*, *th* and *dh* had in the original alphabet not the value of aspirates but that of spirants. It ought to be possible to reach an agreement on this basis, although hitherto in regard to the transcription of these spirants three different ways have been proposed, to wit :

(1). To keep Justi's signs (*kh*, *gh*, *th*, *dh*), taking them for spirants, not aspirates (Geldner).

(2). To use the characters of the modern Greek spirants χ , γ , θ , δ (Hübschmann, and formerly Lepsius and Fr. Müller).

¹ Compare e. g. the statement recently made by Delbrück, *Idg. Verwandschaftsnamen*, p. 215 sq.

(3). To use the Teutonic characters for spirants (adding for Justi's *kh* a new character derived from Teut. *h*) : h^1 , z , p , δ (Pischel and, as far as p and δ are concerned, formerly Rask).

Dr. Jackson has in the transcription of spirants followed the third way, and it seems to me that a careful consideration of the whole problem leads to this decision. The reasons for the preference of h^1 , z , p , δ are stated by Dr. J. on p. 13 sqq. Perhaps he might have laid more stress on the fact that Pischel's proposal alone leads to conformity in the transcription of the different kinds of Avestan spirants by following in the case of gutturals and dentals the model of the labials, where the characters *f* and *w* are used almost unanimously. Hübschmann, indeed, has ventured to introduce for *f* and *w* the Greek ϕ and β , in order to gain uniform characters for the guttural, dental and labial spirants. But this seems a more radical change, compared with the former systems, than the adoption of the Teutonic characters, as *f* has been used hitherto by every one of the different authors without exception. Besides, Hübschmann had to sacrifice to the uniformity of spirants the uniformity of the whole alphabet, inasmuch as he arrives at a mixture of Roman and Greek characters. A mixture of two alphabets, different in style and character, can be defended only in the absence of uniform systems; but in our case the addition of the Teutonic symbols furnishes an alphabet quite consistent with itself. Moreover, Hübschmann's system would require us to use half of the Greek characters in a different way than we are accustomed to, taking γ , δ , β not as mediae (as in ancient Greek), but as spirants (according to modern Greek).

It is not the object of this review to mention in detail all the points where the different transcriptions disagree and Dr. Jackson had to make his choice. Suffice it to say that his criticism and selection are always based upon thorough scholarship and made with reference to the practicability of the different proposals in regard to printing and writing. The value of his essay is increased by several appendices, containing (besides the transcription proposed by the author) a conspectus of the different systems heretofore proposed,² and a bibliographical list of writings on the Avestan alphabet, as well as a substitute alphabet for popular articles and suggestions to the printer.

But a few additional words ought to be said on some points that impart to Dr. Jackson's system an original character. In general we observe that he tries to avoid an excess of diacritical signs. He gives in several cases the preference to a simple although hitherto not commonly used character over a better known one with a diacritical mark. I consider this a distinct advantage of Jackson's system. It has been my conviction long since that more attention ought to be paid to this principle, not only in the transcription of the Avestan characters, but in transcription of foreign alphabets in general.

¹ This sign furnishes a convenient expression for the guttural spirant, not only in the Iranian but in every phonetic alphabet. I have used it e. g. in an alphabet made out for a modern Low German (Waldeck) dialect. The χ used by others for the same sound is objectionable.

² For a future republication of this conspectus I would suggest that the author include the transcriptions used in Bopp's and Schleicher's comparative grammars.

Looking at the details we notice first the replacement of the one *e*-sound by an inverted *e* (*ø*). This transcription is in close connection with the principle just mentioned, as the author avoids thereby the diacritical mark hitherto given to the second *e*-sound. As the turned *e* is more and more being adopted in linguistic works for a "weak" or indistinct vowel, and as such is the nature of the Avestan *z*, it may be expected that this suggestion will meet with general approval.

Another innovation is the introduction of the ligature *ſv* for Justi's *q*, Hübschmann's (*hF* or) *xw*. This character was suggested for the transcription of the Gothic alphabet by the writer of this review in Zacher's *Zeitschr. f. deutsche Philologie*, Vol. 12, p. 482. Braune then adopted it in the second edition of his Gothic grammar, and students of Teutonic grammar are at present familiar with it. As the letter of the Avestan alphabet to be transcribed is a combination of the Pahlavi characters for *h* and *v*, the *ſv* seems to furnish exactly the transcription which is needed.

Furthermore, it may be mentioned that the author, wherever the use of diacritical marks could not be avoided, has endeavored to use constantly the "tag" (*i*) instead of points or accents. He remarks that the tag is somewhat similar to the "derivation stroke" of the original Avestan alphabet, and that this sign proves more practical in printing than either the dot or the accent.

While I have been able thus far to agree entirely with Dr. J., there is a single character in his transcription that I hesitate to accept. I refer to the letter which Justi transcribes by *āo*, Lepsius, Hübschmann and Pischel by *ā̇*. In the Avestan alphabet this character seems to be a combination of a long *a* with following *z*, and accordingly Dr. J. proposes to transcribe it by *āz*. But it is dangerous to define the value and to transcribe a character merely on the basis of its apparent paleographical elements, especially in alphabets like the Avestan, whose gradual development is so imperfectly known to us. We are not able to tell how many changes this ligature had to undergo before it took its present shape. And even its present appearance seems, as far as the second part of the combination is concerned, from the standpoint of paleography open to discussion. At least Lepsius, one of the best authorities in these matters, took it as a ligature of *ā* + *u* (comp. Hübschmann, *KZ.* 24, p. 335). The decision, I think, can only be given by Avestan phonetics. It is important that the questionable sound (1) replaces final *ās* under conditions similar to those under which *-as* is changed into *-ō*, and (2) is found as a variant for final *āu*. These facts seem to point to a pronunciation that might be expressed by *ā̇* or *āo* or *āu*. Was this character to express the same monophthong which is found in Engl. *all*, *saw*, *water*, etc. ? or is its phonetic value that of a diphthong consisting of a long *a* and a short vowel similar to either *o* or *u* ? The *ā̇* (equal to *ā* + *z*) can, as it seems to me, not sufficiently be defended by grammatical reasons. It meets with the further objection that the transcription is open to misapprehension, as it might easily be taken for a combination of *ā* + *z*.

Excepting perhaps this single case, I consider Dr. Jackson's transcription the most satisfactory hitherto proposed, both in regard to its

scientific character and to its practicability. As the author has considered and reconsidered his system with several scholars before publishing it, and as his transliteration, according to his own words, "is given as a sort of compromise and concession both to the radical and the conservative side of the question," I have no doubt that it will find ample endorsement. There is, according to my opinion, every prospect of its being accepted at least by the majority of Avestan and Aryan scholars as the basis for a uniform transcription of the Avestan alphabet.

HERMANN COLLITZ.

Die Griechischen Dialekte in ihrem historischen Zusammenhange mit den wichtigsten ihrer Quellen dargestellt von Dr. OTTO HOFFMANN.
I Band, der Süd-Achaïsche Dialekt. Göttingen, 1891.

Following the author's essay on the inscriptions of Dodona (1890), this volume brings together the inscriptions of the South-Achaïan dialect. The second volume will treat of the North-Achaïan (Thessalian). Hoffmann insists on this name as being more comprehensive and withal less confusing than Aeolic. In view of inscriptions already published, much of the matter here given seems unnecessary repetition of what has been well edited before. The inscriptions of lower Italy are excluded, as they belong to the 'Dorian' group, and the Homeric dialect is excluded altogether. In respect of the lyric writers, Hoffmann believes, with Ahrens, in making tradition conform to inscription. The Achaïan elements of the Doric dialects of the Peloponnesus and the southern islands are added as a third division of the group discussed in this volume (Arcadian and Cyprian being the first two divisions), elements which it is obviously impossible to determine until the characteristics of 'South-Achaïan' are established. With occasional critique of Deecke's and Meister's interpretation of well-known inscriptions, a brief *formen-lehre* and syntax, the author gives, then, as new nothing save the arrangement of inscriptions and an attempt to re-establish general divisions among the Greek dialects. To employ Doric, Ionic and Aeolic (Achaïan) as real distinctions will, however, seem to most of Hoffmann's readers a backward step. For convenience it is well enough to speak of the Doric dialect, understanding thereby whatever dialect employs certain strongly-marked forms, used only in certain localities. But for scientific purposes such general distinctions are worse than useless. Every dialectic form must have its local lines of demarcation presented; but when this is done there is an end of geographical distinctions based on such vague terms as Doric and Aeolic.

Hoffmann's answer to Meister's rather expressive remarks on the former's review of the second volume of the Greek Dialects ('Zum Eleischen Arkadischen Kyprischen Dialekte,' 1890) takes up only one point touched upon by Meister. The latter accuses Hall of publishing inaccurate photographs of the inscriptions in the Cesnola collection (American Oriental Society, Vol. X). Hoffmann now asserts that Hall's photographs are absolutely correct, and that Meister has misrepresented the condition of